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April 30, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Ward
Acting Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Administrator Ward,

I am writing to you today with two urgent requests on behalf of the Town of Wheatfield, NY and its nearly 16,000 residents, hundreds of whom have found their homes listed on newly flood plain maps issued by FEMA.

As you know, homeowners in those zones deemed 'high risk' are required to spend more than \$1,000 annually to insure against flood damage. There could not be a worse time to impose unnecessary financial burdens on Niagara County residents, which is why it is so important that your agency and local officials reach agreement on an accurate map.

Unfortunately, the Town of Wheatfield has yet to receive a sufficient response to numerous requests it has submitted pertaining to the revised maps, including the addresses of properties that may have already been removed. Without this data, the Town cannot file appropriate appeals to the proposed flood maps, the deadline for which is fast approaching on May 16, 2009.

In addition to requesting that this critical information be released to the Town, I am asking that its deadline for filing appeals be moved to a date at least 60 days removed from when the aforementioned data is released. It my understanding that similar extensions have been granted in the past and for a period of up to one year.

I hope you will give this important matter the attention it deserves, and look forward to discussing it further at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER J. LEE

Member of Congress

cc: Senator Charles E. Schumer
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Wheatfield Town Supervisor Tim Demler
FEMA Regional Director Michael J. Dabney
Senator George Maziarz
Assemblywoman Francine DelMonte
Wheatfield Town Board
Niagara County Legislature